

OBEDIENCE VS. DISOBEDIENCE.

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"For if the word spoken by angels was steadfast and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed unto us by them that heard him?" Hebrew 2:2, 3.

We will notice that God promised the people under the old covenant, that if they would obey him, walk in his laws and statutes, he would bless them both spiritually and temporally. The Lord said by Isaiah, if ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land. But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword. Isa. 1:19, 20. And we find many similar scriptures where God promises to bless the people when they would obey him, but would punish and destroy them when they were disobedient. It is so yet in a measure. Abraham was promised that his seed should multiply as the stars of heaven, because he obeyed the Lord's voice and kept his commandments. Gen. 26:4, 5. What brought Abraham to obey? We think the same motive as David had when he says, "I love thy commandments above gold, yea above fine gold." Psalms 119:127. It was love and even Christ learned obedience by the things which he suffered, Heb. 5:8, because of love for the human family and doing his Father's will. He said, "He that hath my commandments and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me." John 14:21. And we are sure that the saints and angels will live in accordance with God's commandments in eternity. Why were the angels that sinned cast down to hell? Because of disobedience. We are here to prepare for the blessed, joyful and happy eternity. The primitive Christians understood that to show their love to their blessed Redeemer was to obey his commandments not because they had to or because of fear. Like David they loved him and his commandments more than all things else. Brother Paul says the time will come when they (the people and churches) will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves, teachers having itching ears; and turn the truth unto fables. II Tim. 4:3, 4. Has that time come? Let us look around. I read in the EVANGELIST, No. 9, an article by brother G. B. Replogle headed "Awry." A preacher declared he would not give the snap of his finger for baptism. As a general thing we hear it not quite that plain, but if we examine preachers and people, many of them esteem and love the commandments in that way. But praise the

Lord, we have the good old ways plainly recorded, and it tells us to teach the people to believe and repent of their sins and be baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, for remission of sins.

Modern teachers teach us that it makes no difference how the ordinance of baptism is performed, whether sprinkling, pouring, or single immersion, the last not four hundred years old. Just so the heart is right and it is done in good faith and purpose. Let us examine a few scriptures and see if that is the way God looks at it. "Behold to obey is better than sacrifice." I Sam. 19:22. Even Moses was not permitted to enter the promised land, nor bring the Israelites there, because he smote the rock twice instead of speaking to it as the Lord commanded him to do. Num. 20:8-12. The modern theory would be that Saul's purpose was all right. After he had been commanded to kill all the people and animals, and he spared the king of the Amalekites, and the best of the flock to offer to the Lord, I Sam. 19, but Saul did not do it because he loved the Lord, but to please the people, just as some preachers do now. But Saul's heart was not right in the sight of God, even if the purpose seemed good.

The good old way of the primitive Christians was that after the love of Christ had been shed abroad in the hearts of the people and the love of him had constrained them to do his commandments, and become new members of the body of Christ, they continued in his service. He knew in his infinite wisdom and goodness that his followers needed to be reminded of his love to keep their first love aglow, so they might be active and faithful in his service and grow in grace and knowledge. He instituted a memorial meal, or supper, and as he having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end, and supper being ended, (and as supper was preparing, or being done, *Emphatic Diaglott*) (and during supper. R. V.) The Passover was typical of Christ, for even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us. I Cor. 5:7. God's chosen people before Christ, looked forward to him, so we look forward to the time when he will come back again, and make his blessed and waiting servants sit to meat, and he will come forth and serve them. Luke 12:37.

A noted historian says about the evening service: "The church brought free gifts, wine and bread; a long table stood prepared, agape or love-feast commenced while godly conversations changed with songs and speeches both of the elder and the laity, then arose as a Jewish house father in Passover time broke the bread,

took the cup and dedicated the communion under the Holy Word, prayer, and thanksgiving. I Cor. 11:26 and I Cor. 11:22-25. This history agrees exactly with I Cor. 11:20-22, only the Corinthians misused the ordinance and Paul corrected them for not tarrying one for another. It is plain that the rich were selfish and wanted what they brought for themselves and even misused the wine and were drunken instead of a common meal for all, sitting down as one family, all having their sins blotted out by the atoning blood of Christ and having been reconciled to God through him and having purified their souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren. See that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently. I Pet. 1:22, 23. Begotten again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. I Pet. 1:3. But Christ's followers had to be in the world and being surrounded by sin and wickedness, and therefore liable to be spotted of this world, and as our carnal tendencies to be high-minded and lovers of this world, more than lovers of God. And Christ wants to have his followers to be a humble people, and all on the same level; not to have ranks or casts among his disciples. He therefore, gave us an example of humility, and he riseth from supper and washed his disciples' feet, which in the first place, is typical of the cleansing of our souls, and secondly, to keep his followers meek and humble enough to wash each others' feet, for he says, "if I, then, your Lord and Master, washed your feet, ye also ought (are bound, *Emphatic Diaglott*) to wash one another's feet, for I have given you an example that ye *should* do as I have done to you." John 13.

Under the old covenant we have a beautiful type or illustration of this service. And the Lord spoke unto Moses saying thou shalt also make a laver of brass and his foot also of brass to wash withal; and thou shalt put it between the tabernacle of the congregation and the altar, and thou shalt put water therein, for Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet thereat. When they go into the tabernacle of the congregation, they shall wash with water that they die not; or when they came near to the altar to minister to burnt offering made by fire unto the Lord; so they shall wash their hands and their feet, that they die not. Ex. 30:17-21. Here we see that the priests had to wash their hands and feet before ministering offering to the Lord, and if they did not, the punishment was death. Jesus said unto Peter: "If I wash thee not thou hast no part with me, which was spiritual death to Peter."